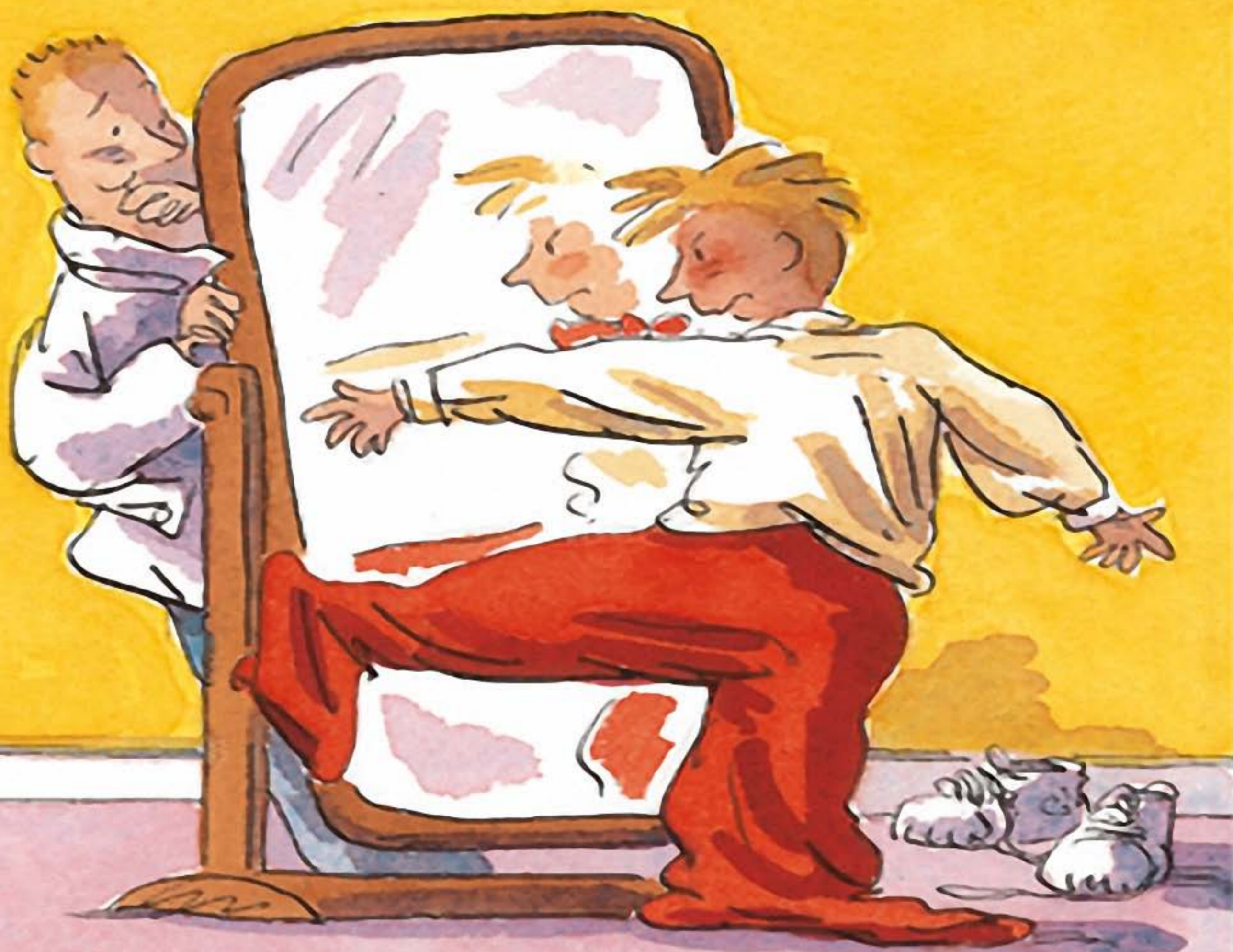




# Stupid Trousers

Susan Gates







‘No!’ shouted Ross. ‘No way!’

His big brother Lee said, ‘Go on. Try them on.’

‘No way!’ shouted Ross again.

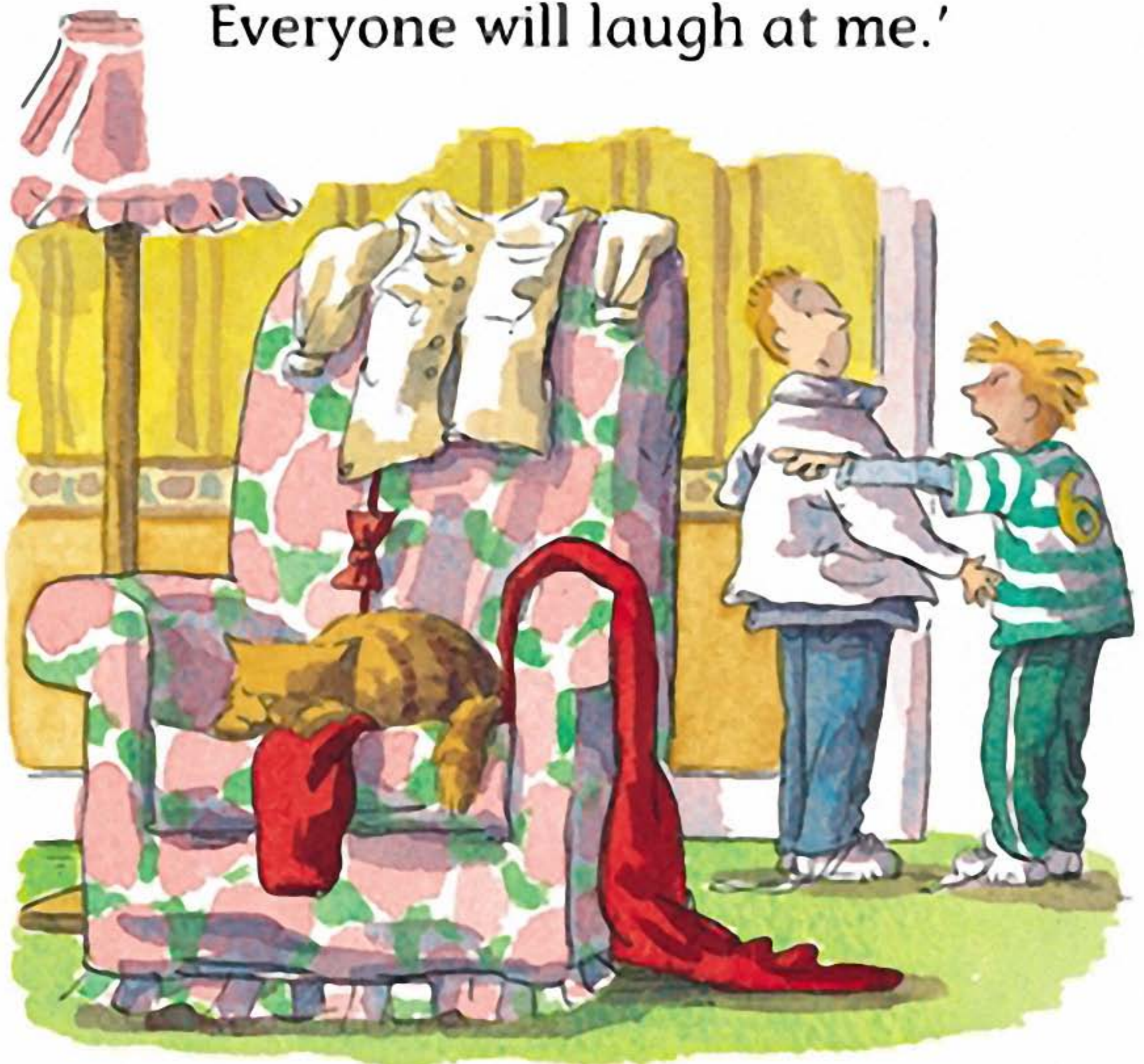
Ross was going to be a page boy at his big sister Kerry’s wedding. And he had just seen the clothes he had to wear.

'I hate them!' he shouted.

He hated the frilly shirt. He hated the red bow tie. But, most of all, he hated the trousers. They were red too. They were made of velvet.

'Those stupid trousers are too long!' Ross shouted. 'They'll trip me up.

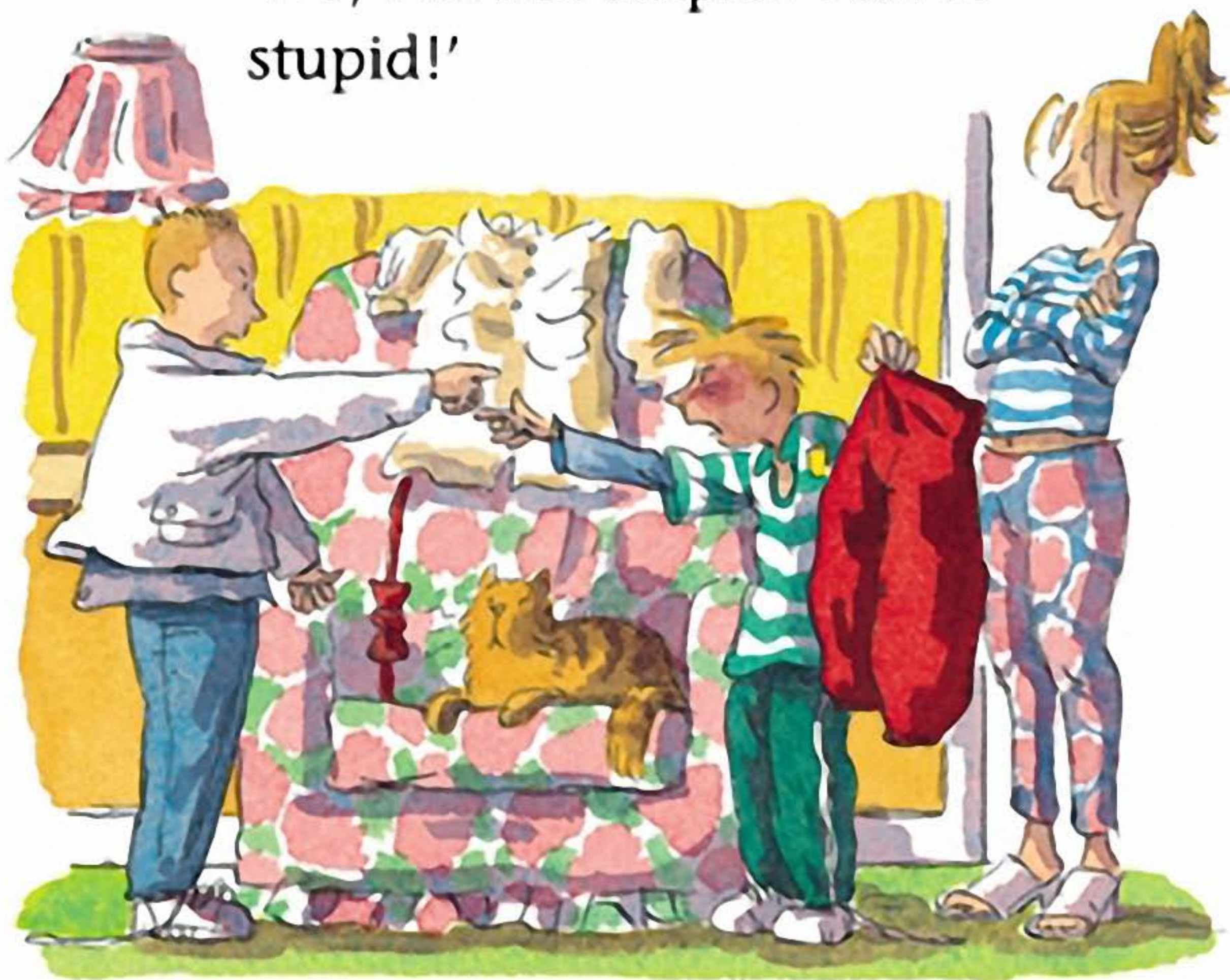
Everyone will laugh at me.'



'No, they won't,' said Lee.

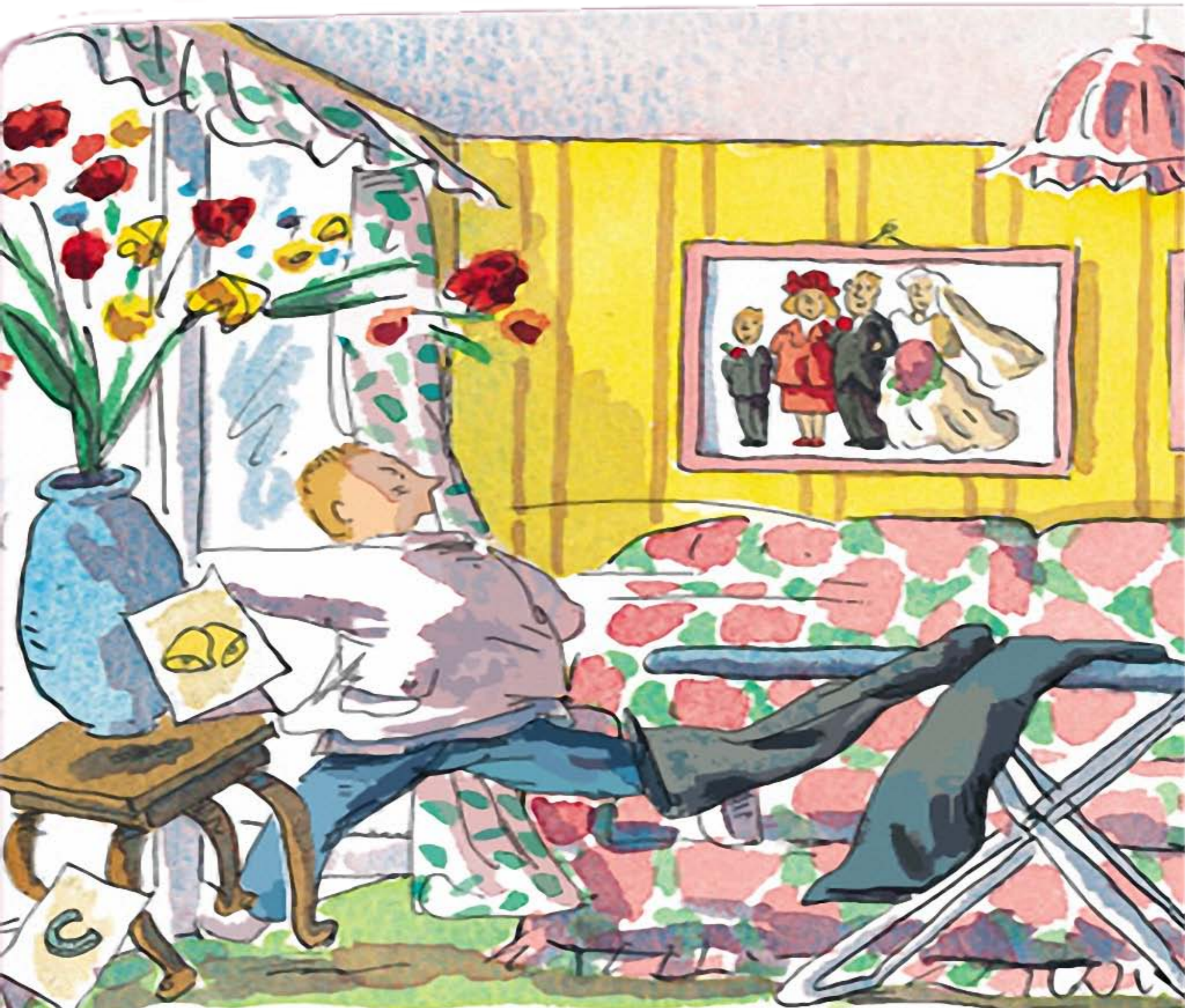
'Yes, they will! And you can shut up. You're stupid as well!'

'No, I'm not stupid. You're stupid!'



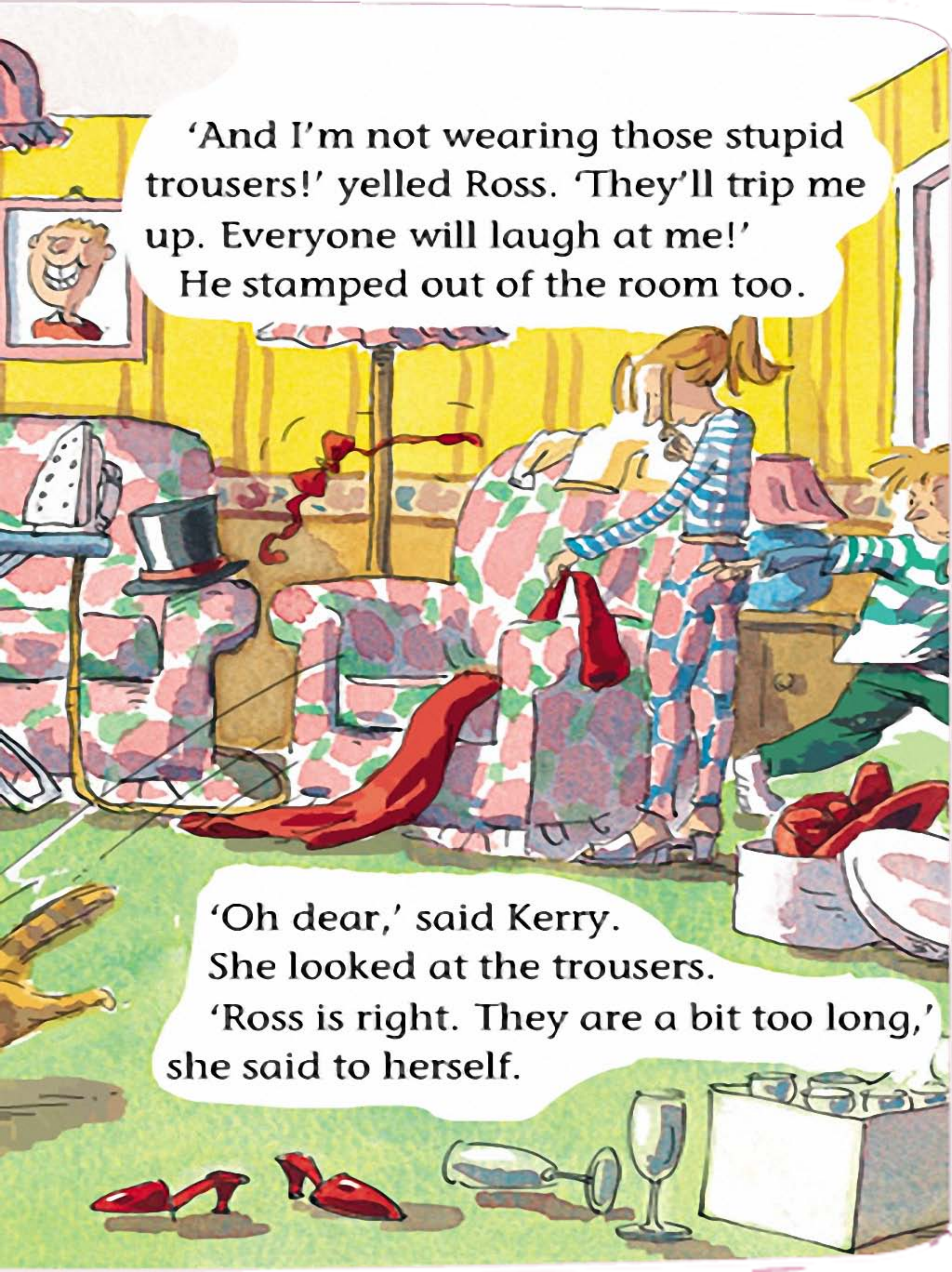
Kerry had come into the room.

'Stop saying rude things to your brother,' she told Lee. 'He's only little.'



'It's not fair,' said Lee. 'He can say rude things to me. He can say whatever he likes. But I can't say them back to him. Just because he's only little.'

Lee stamped out of the room.



‘And I’m not wearing those stupid trousers!’ yelled Ross. ‘They’ll trip me up. Everyone will laugh at me!’  
He stamped out of the room too.

‘Oh dear,’ said Kerry.  
She looked at the trousers.  
‘Ross is right. They are a bit too long,’  
she said to herself.

She got out a needle and thread. She got some scissors. Snip, snip, she cut a bit off the trousers. Then she sewed them up again.

‘There, that’s short enough,’ she thought.

She left the trousers on the back of a chair.





All that day Ross was in a really bad mood. He banged doors. He stamped around the house.

He hated that frilly shirt. He hated the red bow tie. But, most of all, he hated those stupid trousers.



‘They’ll trip me up,’ he told Lee. ‘In a church! In front of all those people. Everyone will laugh at me.’

Just thinking about it made him squirm.

‘No way!’ he told Lee. ‘I’m not going to be a page boy. I’m not going to the wedding. I’m going to run away!’

That night Lee couldn't sleep. Sometimes he got mad with his little brother. But, really, he quite liked him. He didn't want him to run away.



‘What can I do?’ he thought. He couldn't worry Mum. She was busy with the wedding. She had enough on her mind.

Suddenly, *Ping!* An idea popped into his head.

He slipped out of bed. It was very dark. He listened. The house was still and quiet. He crept downstairs like a burglar.



Creak! What was that noise? Only the stairs. Did it wake Mum up? He listened. 'It's OK. No one heard,' he told himself.

He crept into the living room. He looked around.

'There they are!'

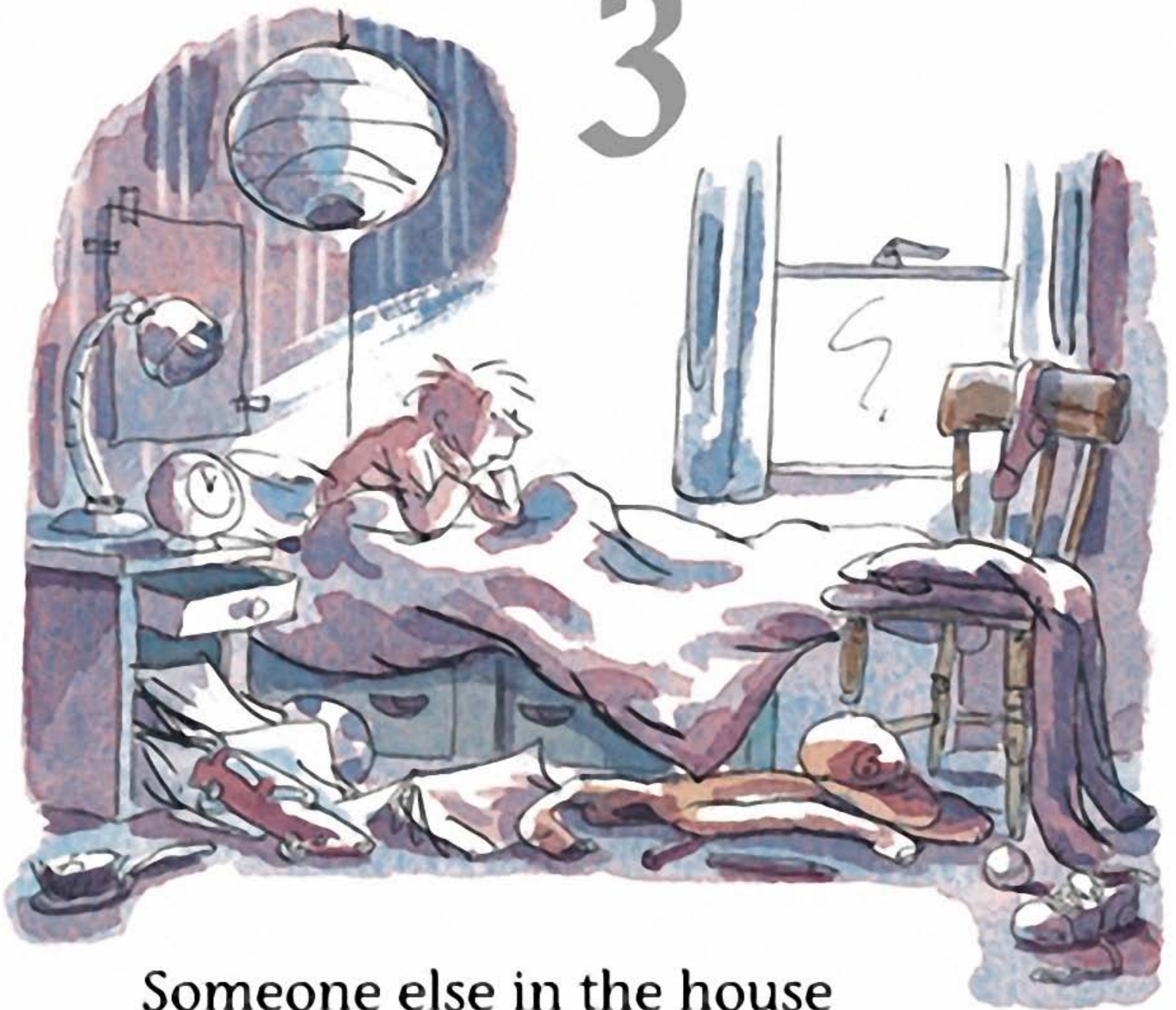


There were the trousers on a chair. Just where Kerry had left them. Then he saw a silver flash in the dark. It was the scissors.

'Great!' he thought. 'Just what I need.'

He picked up the scissors. Then snip, snip, he cut a big bit off each trouser leg. 'That's short enough now,' he thought. He felt really pleased with himself. He left the trousers on the chair. Then he went back to bed and fell fast asleep.





Someone else in the house  
was still wide awake.

It was Ross.

He didn't want to run away. It was  
far too scary. And, anyway, he didn't  
know where to run to.

But what else could he do?

He could put up with the frilly shirt. He could even stand the bow tie. But he just couldn't stand those stupid, long trousers.

Then, *Ping!* An idea popped into his head.



He slipped out of bed. He listened. He couldn't hear a sound.

'Good, they're all asleep,' he thought. He tiptoed downstairs.



It was spooky in the dark. There were big shadows on the walls. One looked like a monster with long fingers, trying to grab him.



‘Aaargh!’

Something brushed against his leg.  
Something furry.

He nearly jumped out of his skin.

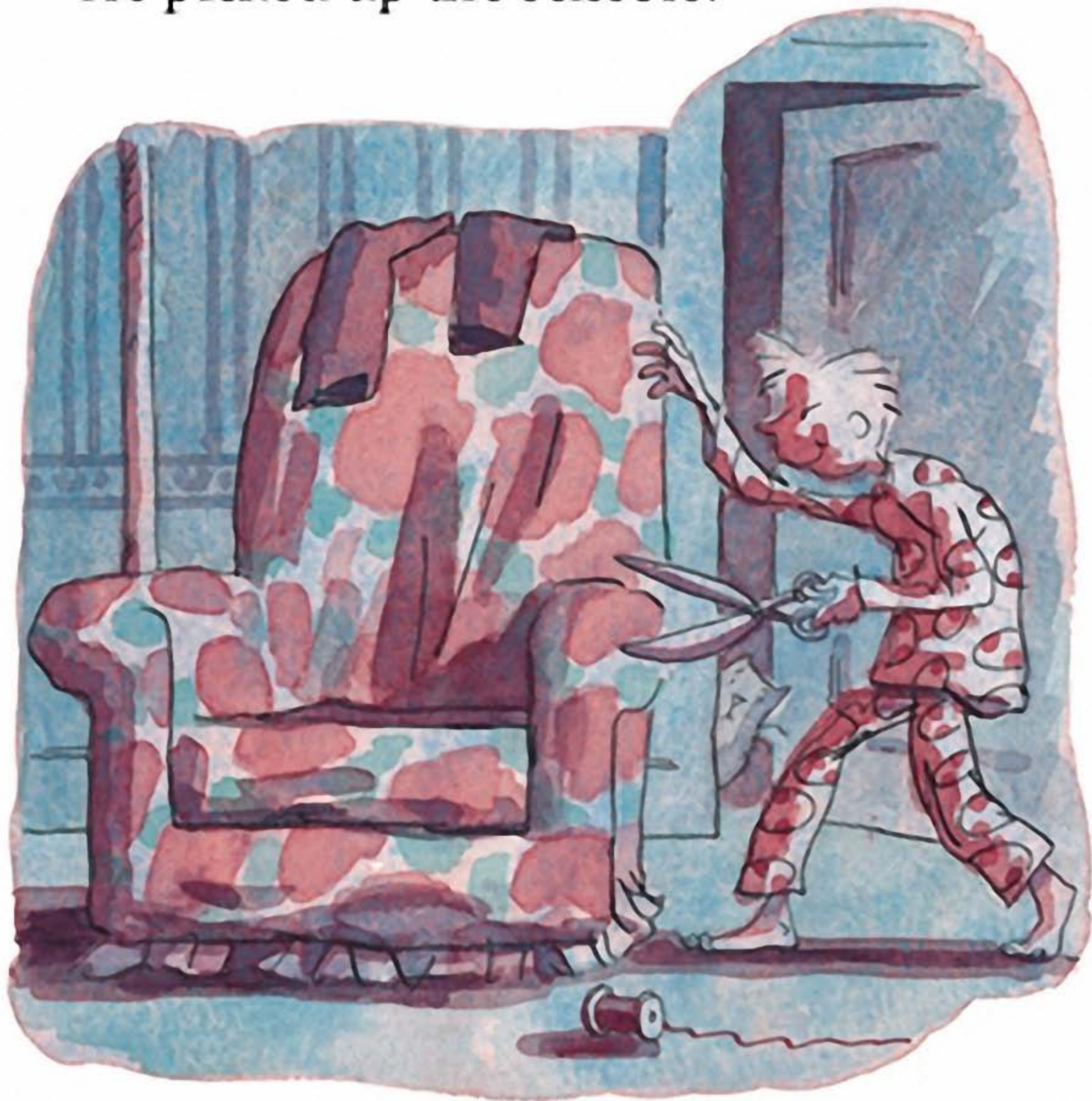
‘Miaow!’ it said.

‘Phew!’ said Ross. ‘Is that you,  
Tiddles? I thought you were a monster!’

He tiptoed into the living room.

He had to find those trousers. At last, he saw them. They were hanging on the chair, where Lee had left them.

He picked up the scissors.



He didn't dare put the light on. It was hard to see what he was doing. But that didn't stop him. Snip, snip. He cut two, great big bits off each trouser leg.



‘That’s short enough,’ he thought.  
‘They won’t trip me up now.’  
He didn’t have to run away.  
He felt really pleased with himself.

He left the trousers on the chair. He went back to bed and fell fast asleep.

Next morning was the day of the wedding. Mum got up before everyone else. She had lots to do. She went downstairs humming a little tune.





~~~~~  
AAAAAAAARGH!  
~~~~~



‘Aaaaaaaargh!’

A terrible scream rang through the house. It shook the windows. It rattled the doors. It woke everyone up.

Mum had just found the trousers.

# 4



Everyone was shouting at once. It was a terrible din.

‘How did they get so short!’ yelled Kerry.

‘Don’t ask me,’ said Lee and Ross, both at the same time.

Kerry was really mad. She was waving the trousers around.



Only, they weren't trousers any more. They were very short, red, velvet shorts.

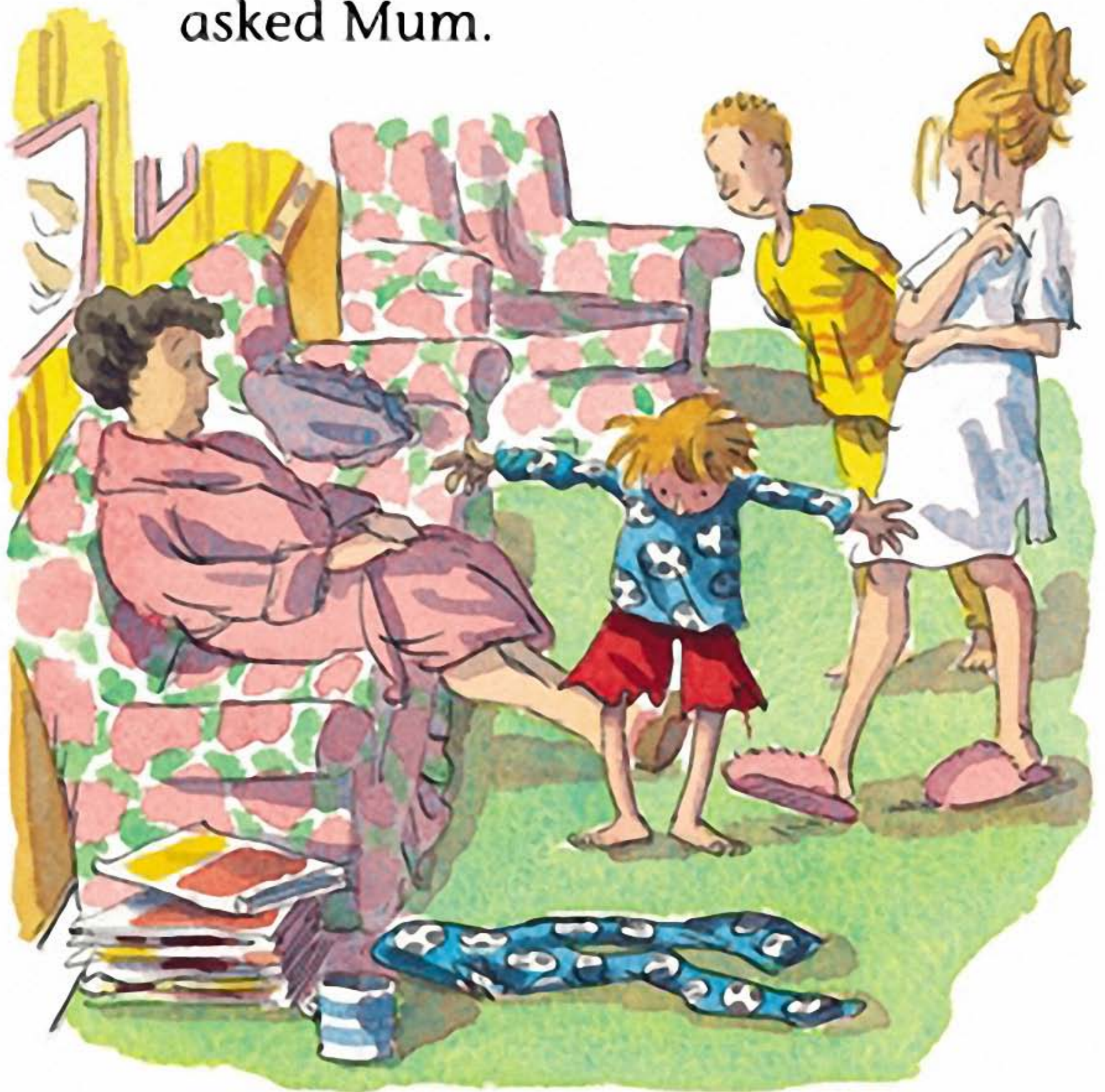
'Never mind how it happened,' said Mum. 'Let's all calm down. Try them on, Ross. They might still look all right.'

'No way! No way! No way!' Ross started yelling.

But Kerry looked really dangerous.  
So Ross had to try them on.

Kerry and Mum and Lee all stared at  
Ross in his tiny, red velvet shorts.

‘Do you think they look all right?’  
asked Mum.



'He looks quite sweet,' said Kerry.

'I don't want to look sweet!' howled Ross.

'He does look sweet, doesn't he?' Mum agreed.



'Oh no,' thought Lee. 'They're going to make him wear them!'

He had to do something, fast!

Then, *Ping!* An idea popped into his head.

‘Look at his legs,’ he said to Mum and Kerry. ‘They look really stupid! They’re white and skinny. They’re horrible. They’re like two white sticks!’



Ross opened his mouth. He was going to yell, ‘Stop saying rude things about my legs!’



But then he understood. He understood that Lee was trying to help him!

So he said, 'Lee's right. My legs look horrible.'

'I told you,' said Lee. 'And he's got scabby knees as well. Uuurgh! They'll make people sick!'

'I have! I have!' agreed Ross. 'Look at them, Mum! They're horrible. They're so scabby, they even make me sick!'

Mum was thinking.

'Lee's right,' she said, at last. 'Those trousers won't do at all.'

'He'll have to wear something else,' said Kerry.



'Great!' said Lee and Ross both at the same time.

So Ross went to the wedding in a pair of his own trousers.



'Thank you, Lee!' said Ross. 'Thanks for being so rude to me. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! You saved me from those stupid trousers.'

‘That’s all right,’ said Lee. ‘Any time.’  
He couldn’t help giving a big grin.  
It’s not every day your little brother  
gives you a great big Thank You.  
Just when you’ve been really rude  
to him.

And all because of a pair of  
stupid trousers.

